1992-1996 would be deemed to have completed rural assignment; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) State Bank of India (SBI) has reported that Govindpuri (UP) and Maharajpur (UP) are rural branches, whereas Dosha (UP) is a semi-urban branch.

(b) to (e) The center with a population of less than 10,000 is classified as rural. The classification of branches is done by RBI on the basis of the population group which was last done with effect from 1.1.1997 by keeping the 1991 census as base.

Promotions in State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur

1701. SHRI GANDHI AZAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of total employees post-wise promoted by State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur during the last three years;

(b) what is the number of SC/ST employees out of the above;

(c) the details of issues raised by All India Association for SC/ST and Physically handicapped people upliftment with bank during the last year;

(d) whether Association has been informed about the action taken till now;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) by when action will be taken to give reply to the Association and to sort out all issues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) The details of

total employees post-wise, promoted by State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur during the last three years and the number of SC/ST employees out of the above are given below:—

	Year of promotion 1999			Year of promotion 2000			Year of promotion 2001		
Prmoted to scale	Total employees promoted	No. of SC	No. of ST	Total employees promoted	No. of SC	No. of ST	Total employees promoted	No. of SC	No. of ST
I	59	4	2	59	15	8	217	34	15
II	161	46	18	136	33	14	105	31	9
III	77	10	1	74	8	2	106	11	2
IV	34	4	—	28	2	—	48	3	—
V	6	—	—	13	2	—	14	—	—

(c) The Bank has reported that All India Association for SC/ST and Physically handicapped people uplifitment raised the following issues with the bank during the last year;

(i) Replacement of sweepers appointed from general category by SC-ST candidates at all places where there are such cases in the bank.

(ii) Pre-promotion training to all eligible SC/ST peons for promotion to clerical cadre.

(iii) Extension of scholarship facility for the wards of the part-time employees.

(iv) Increase in conveyance allowance to physically handicapped.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) The bank has advised the Association as under:—

(i) Generally sweepers are from SC category. However, there is no bar on appointment of general category as sweeper.

(ii) The bank has decided to give pre-promotion training to SC/ST sub-staff at the time of their promotion to clearical cadre.

(iii) As regards conveyance allowance, the bank has put up the matter to the bank's Board for approval.

The bank has further stated that all issues have been sorted out and settled.

Small Savings Scheme of Post Offices

1702. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of occasions when Government resorted to cut in rate of interest on all small saving schemes in post offices and banks together with the details thereof;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government are aware that such frequent reduction of rate of intertest on small term deposits are likely to have an adverse effect on the growth in small savings besides affecting the income of the salaried group and senior citizens?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The Government has revised the rates of interest on small savings schemes on four occasions in the recent past *viz*: 1.1.1999, 15.1.2000, 1.3.2001 and 1.3.2002, as the real rates of interest on these schemes were considered to be high preventing downward movement of the other rates of interest in the economy. A lower interest rate structure is expected to stimulate growth from which all sections of the society would benefit. Despite the revision in the rates of interest on small savings schemes, collections have continued to grow. Interest rates before and after 1.1.1999 are shown in the statement enclosed.